(b) if so, whether the Central Government have allotted three new bulletin slots on the prime time to M/s. Rainbow Communications despite opposition by the staff;

(c) if so, the facts and details thereof; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to bring transparency in the allotment of time slots?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) All programme matters relating to Doordarshan fall within the purview of Prasar Bharati which is now an autonomous statutory corporation. Prasar Bharati, as per their existing policy, do not allow private producers to telecast sponsored news programme on Doordarshan. However, M/s. Rainbow Communications, Calcutta were allowed to telecast new based programme in the regional service of DDK, Calcutta by the then CEO, Shri S.S. Gill, without the approval of the Prasar Bharati Board. The decision was subsequently reviewed and the earlier agreement cancelled. Since the producer approached the Calcutta High Court and obtained a stay order, the programme continues as at present. Prasar Bharati has moved both the Calcutta High Court and the Supreme Court against the verdict of the High Court. The matter is sub-judice.

(d) All programme matters fall within the purview of Prasar Bharati and decisions in such cases, including allotment of time slots, are taken by them keeping in view the programme requirements of Doordarshan and over all interest of the organisation.

Clearance of News Telecasts by Regional Doordarshan Stations

592. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether news telecastes from the reginal Doordarshan stations need prior clearance by the authorities in New Delhi and the reasons for this standing arrangements;

(b) whether Government will consider increasing the frequency of news in local languages from the regional stations; and

(c) the nature of consultations with the State Governments in developing programmes for the regional stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Prasar Bharati have intimated that it is not possible at present to increase the frequency of news in local languages from the regional Kendras due to lack of manpower, finance and other infrastructural constraints.

(c) No consultation is normally done except in rare cases when it is considered essential to verify the authenticity and objectivity of the story.

Assistance All India Women's Conference in Setting-up Bio-Gas Plants

593. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that All India Women's Conference is assisting the villages to set up bio-gas plants in the villages throughout the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how many bio-gas plants have so far been set up by the Conference in the villages of Gujarat with district-wise details and how many are likely to be set up during 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) All Indian Women's Conference (AIWC) has been assisting non-governmental oranisations

(NGOs) to promote and set up family type bio-gas plants in different States since 1993-94 under the Central Sector Scheme-National Project on Bio-gas Development (NPBD). All India Women's Conference has been allocated a target of 1200 family type bio-gas plants, out of a national target of 1.33 lakh plants for 1998-99. In turn, All India Women's Conference has sub-allocated the target to non-governmental organisations working in eight States; namely, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

(c) All Indian Women's Conference (AIWC) implemented National Project on Bio-gas Development (NPBD) in the State of Gujarat in the year 1993-94 only and achieved 50 bio-gas plants in district Vadodara and one plant in district Ahmedabad. During 1997-98, while All Indian Women's Conference (AIWC) has not set up any bio-gas plant in Gujarat, the State Government Khadi and Vilalge Industrirs Commission and National Dairy Development Board have set up a total of about 12790 plants.

Computation of Pension for Government Employees Retiring between January to September, 1996

594. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether for Government employees who retired between January to September, 1966 the computation of pension on 10 months average is adversely affecting them as the basic pay and DA on the old rate for the period before 1st January, 1996 is considered without giving them any fitment weightage for the pay in the pre-revised scale;

(b) whether in some cases, the pension entitlement for the category is less by Rs. 2000—2500 per month in comparison to those who retired in October, 1997 and afterwards in the equivalent grade; and

(c) if so, what remedial action Government propose to redress their grievances?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) to (c) In accordance with the provisions contained in Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1972 for the purpose of computation of pension, emoluments drawn by a Government servant during the last 10 months of his service are taken into account. Accordingly in the case of Government employees who retired within 10 months from the date of introduction of new scales of pay i.e. 1.1.1996, emoluments drawn in the pre-revised scales of pay for the period to 1.1.1996 and pay in the revised scales for the remaining period have been taken into account. In the case of Government servants retiring within 10 months from the date of introduction of new pay scales, in addition to basic pay dearness allowance as well as IR (I) and IR (II) drawn during the period prior to 1.1.1996 have also been treated as emoluments for the purpose of computation of pension. However the revised pension sanctioned to post-1996 pensioners after the introduction of the new scales is in no case less then the original basic pension sanctioned to them based on the pre-revised scales. In some cases the pension so fixed has resulted in less pension than their counterparts who retired by pre-1996. However, those employees who have retired or will be retiring between 1.1.1996 and 31.12.1997 have an option to retain the pre-revised scales of pay and have their pension and death-cum-retirement gratuity calculated under the rules in force immediately before coming into the effect of these orders. The pension and death-cum-retirement gratuity in such cases will be regulated in accordance with the orders in force prior to 1.1.1996.